received, it will be decided on merits and as per the rules in force at that time.

Bifurcation of Palghat Railway Division

1033. SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Railway Reforms Committee had recommended to bifurcate the over-congested Palghat Railway Divsion, as far back as in 198S;

(b) whether it is a fact that this bifurcation would result in formation of the Salem Railway Division;

(c) whether it is a fact that the then Railway Minister had announced sanction for the Salem Railway Division on 13th March, 1999 in Parliament; and

(d) if so, when the Salem Railway Division would be formed and when the action would be initiated in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Encroachment of Railway Land

1034. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA:
SARDAR GURCHARAN SINGH TOHRA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated railway land under illegal occupation encroachment in the country as per latest survey conducted by the Ministry;

(b) the steps taken by Government in this regard;

(c) whether there is any proposal under Government's

consideration to dispose of some railway land for commercial use; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) About 2457 hectares.

(b) Removal of encroachments on Railway land is a continuous process. Regular inspections are done by the Railway officials to prevent fresh encroachments. New encroachments are removed as soon as they are noticed. Regarding old encroachments, action is taken to remove them under the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971 with the help of Civil Police.

To prevent encroachment on Railway land, construction of boundary wall and fencing in the vulnerable sections are undertaken. Planting of suitable trees/shrubs including quick growing thorny bushes is also done.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Conversion of Ajmer-Chittaurgarh-Udaipur Sector into Broad Gauge

1035. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1815 given in the Rajya Sabha on 17th December, 1999 and state:

(a) what is the exact status of gauge conversion of different seven sectors in Rajasthan; and

(b) by when the Ajmer-Chittaurgarh-Udaipur sector would be converted into broad gauge?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH):